

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 ABIDJA 00271 101648Z

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 AGR-10 CIAE-00 COME-00 INR-07

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FRB-01 OMB-01 L-02 /048 W

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R 101058Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1642

INFO AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

UNCLAS ABIDJAN 0271

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EIND, IV

SUBJECT: BLUE BELL COTIVO TEXTILE AGREEMENT SIGNING

1. JANUARY 8, MINPLAN DIAWARA AND MINFIN BEDIE SIGNED THE CONVENTION CREATING BLUE BELL COTE D'IVOIRE (BBCI). BLUE BELL WAS REPRESENTED BY RODGER LE MATTY, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS ON BLUE BELL, INC. AND PRESIDENT OF BBCI, AND ERVIN DIXON, VICE PRESIDENT OF FINANCE FOR THE PARENT COMPANY.

2. THE BLUE BELL FACTORY, PRESENTLY UNDER CONSTRUCTION AT YOPOUGON NEAR ABIDJAN, WILL EMPLOY APPROXIMATELY 1,000 WORKERS BY 1980. WITHIN A YEAR'S TIME, THE FACTORY WILL BE PRODUCING BLUEJEANS -(AT AN ESTIMATED LEVEL OF 4 MILLION UNITS A YEAR)- 80 PERCENT OF WHICH WILL BE EXPORTED. THIS WILL BE A MAJOR CONTRIBUTION TO THE IVORIAN TEXTILE INDUSTRY EXPANSION EXPECTED DURING THIS DECADE.

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PAGE 02 ABIDJA 00271 101648Z

3. BLUE BELL COTE D'IVOIRE IS PRESENTLY CAPITALIZED

AT 180 MILLION CFA (ROUGHLY \$750,000) AND OWNER-SHIP IS SPLIT BETWEEN THREE COMPANIES: BLUE BELL, INC. (51 PERCENT), THE U.S. COMPANY WHICH PRODUCES WRANGLER TRADEMARK BLUEJEANS AND OTHER READY-TO-WEAR; RIEGEL TEXTILE CORPORATION, (19 PERCENT), ANOTHER AMERICAN FIRM WHICH SPECIALIZES IN PRODUCTION OF COTTON MATERIALS FOR READY-TO-WEAR; AND SOCIETE ICODI (30 PERCENT) AN IVORIAN COMPANY WHICH PRODUCES COTTON CLOTH UNDER THE COTIVO TRADEMARK AT AGBOVILLE. OVER TIME THE CAPITALIZATION WILL INCREASE TO 500 MILLION CFA (OR ABOUT \$2.1 MILLION). IT IS EXPECTED THAT THE INCREASED DEMAND FOR COTTON WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THIS OPERATION WILL PROVIDE A STIMULUS TO DOMESTIC PRODUCTION. ADDITIONALLY THE GOIC HAS ALREADY INITIATED PROGRAMS TO ENCOURAGE INCREASED COTTON PRODUCTION AND THIS NEW DEMAND WILL CERTAINLY SUPPORT SUCH EFFORTS. IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT DOMESTIC COTTON PRODUCTION WILL DOUBLE BY 1980. AS MOST PRODUCTION IS IN THE NORTH AND CENTER OF THE COUNTRY, THIS WILL ALSO CONTRIBUTE TO THE GOIC ATTEMPT TO "SPREAD THE WEALTH" OUTSIDE OF THE ABIDJAN AREA.

SMITH

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